

# It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in Multnomah Village

By Polina Olsen  
The Southwest Portland Post

Multnomah Village was beginning to look like Christmas, especially during November's First Friday. As usual, the village celebrated the first Friday evening of the month with extended business hours, specials, wine, munchies and more. On November 4, lights shone, the street glowed, and stuffed animals gazed from the windows at the toy store. We strolled along Southwest Capitol Highway to catch the air and check out the fun.



Jazz duo Ben Graves and Marc Hutchinson set the mood at the Geezer Gallery. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

At our first stop, **The Geezer Gallery**, a crowd of all ages sampled wine and gorgeous plates of cookies that looked like artwork themselves. Jazz duo Ben Graves and Marc Hutchinson set the mood. The gallery promotes accomplished elder artists. This night they opened an Iraqi artist's show called *Unveiling: Farooq Haasan*.

Across the street, the **Multnomah Arts Center** held several events starting with passersby munching fruit, cookies and cake around the comfortable lobby.

Tonight featured the opening reception of the center's instructor art show (runs through November 29). This included finely crafted metal arts, textiles, ceramics and paintings. We paused to admire Carol Hupage's marvelous bright picture of the state fair. In the next room, a row of women from the **Columbia Basin Basketry Guild** ([www.basketryguild.org](http://www.basketryguild.org)) displayed exquisite baskets and demonstrated their craft. The group meets at the arts center the third Thursday of every month from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Check their website for special beginners classes.

Moving up the street, **Thinker Toys** celebrated 17 years in business with a sale. A human-sized (not giraffe-sized), sweet-faced toy giraffe pointed the way to complementary treats. Former Multnomah Neighborhood Association Chair Randy Bonella showcased his handmade wooden pens at the **Village Frame & Gallery**. Priced between \$20 and \$60, and using standard refills, they'd make an elegant and practical gift.

After all the cookies, we passed on

**Fat City's** \$9.95 *All You Can Eat Spaghetti Special*. (Kids under 12 eat free.) Instead, we took a break at **Annie Bloom's Books**, filled as usual with browsers quietly combing the shelves. Store cat Molly Bloom, the successor to the late renowned Oscar Wilde, curled up in the cash register out-box, as cats will. "We call it the cat-basket now," a salesperson explained.

**O'Connor's Restaurant and Bar** was jumping, **Jules of Morocco** looked exotic, and customers sat stringing treasures across the street at **Village Beads**.

Over at **MonoGraphic Studio** across from the old post office, photographer Lee Meier hosted his usual First Friday celebration. A group on comfy couches by the fireplace enjoyed complementary wine and hors d'oeuvres as they waited for the band to arrive. Meier said, "It's a chance to network with other photographers, models, neighbors and friends. Doors open wider at 5 p.m. Bring a friend."

If you missed November's First Friday, never mind, there are many more. Holiday Gala in the Village kicks off December 2 at 5:30 p.m. and runs all weekend. So forget the crowded malls. Find that special and original gift in the village.

Join Santa for carriage rides, live music, caroling, and complimentary treats. Expect door prizes, and customer gifts. Start Saturday with an 8:30 a.m. pancake breakfast at the **Lucky Lab**, a benefit for the Southwest Hills Kiwanis Club. Remember, parking is on the street and in the lower lot of the Multnomah Arts Center.



Randy Bonella showcased his handmade wooden pens at the Village Frame & Gallery. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

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